

Fetus Film Frolic

The Box: A Womb With a View

Town describes *The Box* as a "surreal montage of someone's dream on what life is all about."

"The film is similar to the music with it," he says, "with different images happening at once, and different sound textures as well. The theme of the film is that within a person's mind, their thinking goes in many different directions. Because of such a jumble of images, the film seems almost completely different every time you look at it. The five screens project different collages, but they all join in together as all the images bounce at you for brief periods."

Why *The Box*? "Imagine looking into a box, or your head being stuck in a box," says Jed. "It's almost like dreaming; when you're dreaming, you're completely surrounded by the image."

There is some narrative to the film, but the lack of dialogue and

The umbrella of Fetus Productions shelters a talented team responsible for a prolific array of diverse artistic and musical projects. Mainman Jed Town compares Fetus to a body, "with hands and feet all over the place, working on different things." In the five years of Fetus, the "body" has produced music, concerts, films, records — and clothing. Earlier this year they released *Luminous Trails*, and this month Fetus unveils *The Box*, a half-hour film that can be seen with the Fetals in concert during their tour of the main centres.

narration on the movie soundtrack means the film can easily be extended. "In a year's time, when we've written more music, the film could be an hour long."

Each evening's show will begin with a screening of *The Box* then it'll be into the live music with the Fetals: Jed, Serum Fort, Geoff on

percussion and Ian "Skullduggery" Gilroy on drums.

"The Fetals will be over the top in the last section, blasting away," says Jed. "It'll be like a reckless band by the end, we'll all be so hyped up we don't have to think so much about staying in control."

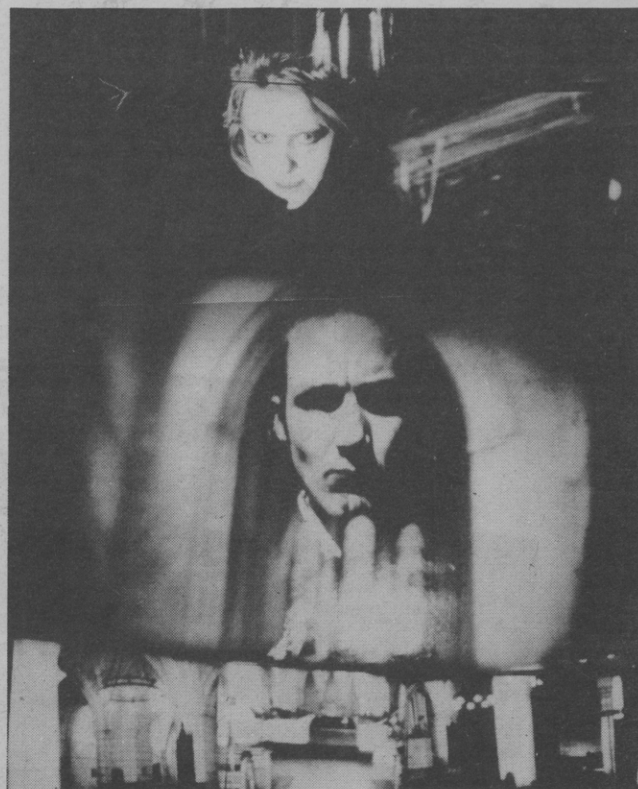
The essence of Fetus Produc-

tions, stresses Town, is that it is several individuals working separately or together under the "company name." "We don't play live much, we work on the music individually in the studio, or on film or other projects. We enjoy working like that, and get a lot more done."

When the separate projects are completed, Fetus is ready to unleash another multifarious production on the world. "It takes a bit longer, but once you've got the film and the music ready, you can use it as you want." Hence, the Fetus formula has managed to stretch the traditional limitations of stage or recording work.

"With the film, everyone in the group contributes towards the total vision, not just to one part of it," says Town. "That way, you get a varied vision, a wider perspective."

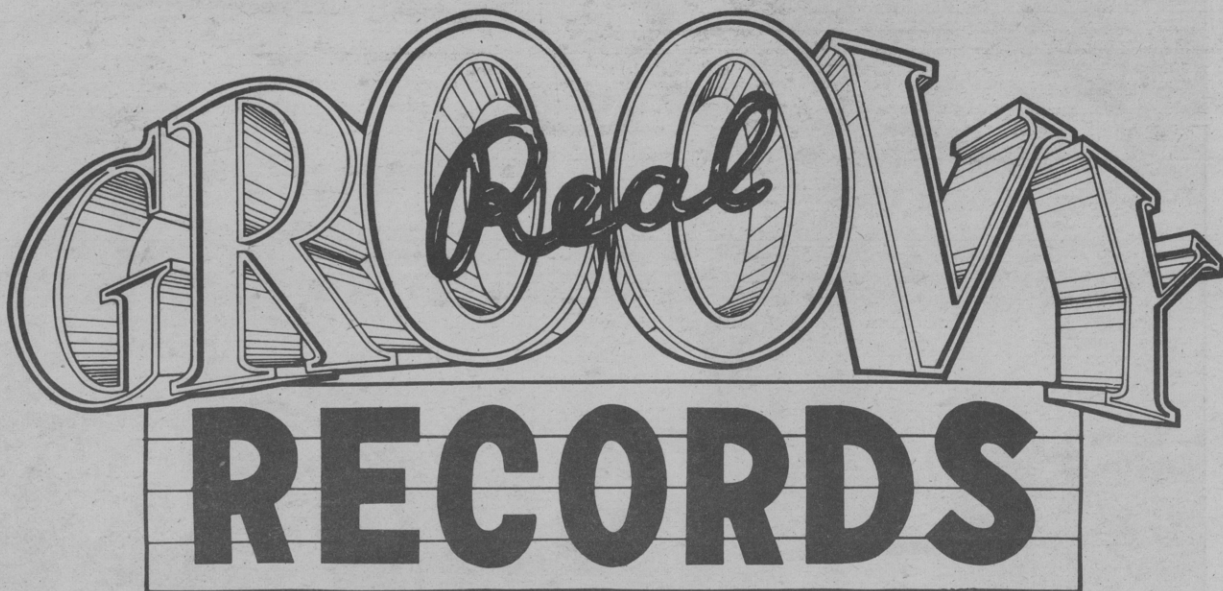
The latest Fetus creation is even more diverse than previous productions, according to Jed. "I think the last time our performance suffered because it didn't use film, and the music wasn't so varied. It didn't have the dynamics of this one." The new Fetus music ranges from soft harpsichord and acoustic guitar pieces



Another Fetus Production: 'The Box!'

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to heavy, metallic synthesised and sampled sounds. "I'd like to put out a record with the Fetals on one side, totally electric, and on the other side, very gentle acoustic music — like male and female sides."

Judging by the quiet-spoken determination of Jed Town, and the prolific output of Fetus Productions over the years, it won't be long before we see that idea come to fruition. Fetus has secured releases for several of their records in England, Germany and Japan. Within six months Town, Fort and fellow Fetus Broxin will be overseas, but Jed sees them getting together to perform in Europe or Japan.

"We've never had a manager, we've always organised things ourselves," he says. "Usually our contacts say, 'Come over, and we'll sort

things out.' You have to be there to get things done, instead of just corresponding."

But when you're hustling for your various creative projects, attitude is important. "You have to be humble, and also realistic," says Jed. "You find out who you can work with, borrow equipment from or sort out deals with. You can't get everything you want, though a lot is possible by associating with people who are working like you, and like working with you. It's easier doing it this way than just being in a band together."

More than just a band, but a whole creative ideology and package; don't miss the latest Fetus Production — T-shirts, fabrics, soundtracks, recordings, film and concert!

Chris Bourke

'RESIDENTS' FROM PAGE 2

to San Francisco as they found it was a better environment.

"Everything they do though, is carefully thought out and has a definite reason. They never do things without a reason — I mean, the Residents are *what they are* for a very good reason."

What about their mentor, the Mysterious N Senada?

"I haven't heard from him for years — in fact, I've only heard of him — I've never met him"

Has anyone?

"The Residents say they have, but they're notorious liars! As far as I know, he was someone and was a very important, almost father-figure to the Residents in their early days. I don't know if he'd like them at the moment though because they're so public — he was responsible for the Theory of Obscurity. The Theory of Obscurity was very important to the Residents — a big influence. He basically told them to make music not caring what other people thought, to just do it for themselves. But they don't adhere to that theory so strictly now as they used to — they like to think they keep to the spirit of it, though."

If "ignorance of your culture is not considered cool," do you think that the Residents are the *coolest* band ever, because they're not only aware of the culture, they're actively and constantly trying to rewrite it?"

Hardy laughs. "That was my line. I was responsible for much of the Ralph Records publicity and came into a bit of flak about that statement. But I've never really thought

about it *that way* — it was just a bit of American advertising style, like 'use this, because your armpits stink!' — y'know, heavy-handed. It was a way of saying 'Your life's incomplete if you've ignored the Residents. I wanted everyone to go out and buy the record, to check it out because I don't think they should be ignored.'

The Residents have always been acknowledged as being "ahead of their time," so when are people going to catch up with them?

"I wouldn't say they're 'ahead of their time,' it's just that their ideas are not matched up with their time, they're not doing the obvious thing. I think that the Residents have influenced a whole generation of bands not yet arrived on the scene — bands who will be hand-held by the Residents, like the Mysterious N Senada did for the Residents themselves, and those bands will make 'top pop or whatever' records. The Art of Noise are a group who use a lot of the Residents' ideas, just putting it to a disco beat. The Residents will be *very* influential one day."

Right now, they are the weirdest in the world, and they are brilliant. Hardy's dripping wet still and says there wasn't much he could do about the intruder into his room — he had his own key, you see. Hardy will try to be fully dressed in Auckland.

Oh well. (But what does it all mean?)

Paul McKessar

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